

# Stephen Kinzer at FFF Conference 2008, 6 of 6

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Stephen Kinzer on "Regime Change: Promise and Peril" at the Future of Freedom Foundation's <http://fff.org> Restoring the Republic, 2008.

Stephen Kinzer is an American author and newspaper reporter. He is a veteran New York Times correspondent who has reported from more than fifty countries on five continents. During the 1980s he covered revolution and social upheaval in Central America. In 1990, he was promoted to bureau chief of the Berlin bureau and covered the growth of Eastern and Central Europe as they emerged from Soviet rule.

Playlist of Kinzer's lecture: [http://www.youtube.com/view\\_play\\_list?p=25CC550549F509ED](http://www.youtube.com/view_play_list?p=25CC550549F509ED)

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hi hi my name is David Henderson I enjoyed your talk wats to thank you steve ur stealing well my mother likes Stephen because she'll be watching this all of that ok i'm wondering i remember by the way just a little back just quick background i will get to my question but i grew up thinking everything Buckley said was true so and he wrote about Cuban he had this great article great title anyway Herbert Matthews I got Fidel Castro I got my job through the New York Times Matthews so when when Fidel Castro made that comment and I know Herbert Matthews was kind of pro Fidel did he at least report that no because Herbert Matthews was not yet in Cuba okay he had been in Cuba during the time when Castro was still up in the hills then he came back later on for another return visit but the controversial episode that Herbert Matthews was involved in for those of you they don't know this Herbert Matthews was a famous New York Times correspondent he went to Cuba and I wanted to find out if it was really true that the castro movement had been crushed and castro cleverly organized this little theater for him where he had his 25 soldiers walked by and groups of five or ten and then quickly sort of changed their shirts and walk by again a walk by again and Herbert Matthews with all the inside of a New York cars montant wrote that thousands of people are following Fidel that episode happened during during the war dat you know it shows you that once in a while even Americans can get snookered another quick one I don't know if you want to answer this but the congressman who wouldn't didn't want to negotiate with Iran because of what happened yeah you know 27 years or no 20 29 years ago do you care to name you know I'm gonna be very honest with you and I'm going to tell you that I heard this story from another congressman who approached him and he didn't tell me the name and now

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and he didn't tell me the name and now I'm glad he didn't because then I'd have to tell you okay and just one other thing what's so ironic about that is remember what Jimmy Carter said and Sheldon Richmond quoted this once in our what Jimmy Carter said when the Iranians when they took the embassy talked about what happened in 1953 which was 26 years earlier not 29 years earlier and Jimmy Carter's famous to line phrase that that was ancient ancient history and that really says it all because we like to think that our interventions happen then they're over they never have any long-term effects it's like saying you can beat your child brutally every day for years and then once you stop beating he'll be fine all there'll be no effect everything will be perfect again that's exactly the mentality we're following Stephen thank you how do you get individuals companies corporations actually specifically elected officials not to be so influenced by these major corporations every time they've got a problem because what you're say what you're talking about is that what

we have to become a moral country kind of like what John Adams had to say about this in order to be self-governing to be immoral / people well you've put your finger on a huge challenge for America you know we have two huge lobbies there's a there's a great lobby of people that are making huge amounts of money off the war machine it's it's a spectacular Lee profitable business and then you have this other lobby made up of the corporations that want to go in right after the war and reap all the spoils that combination is very very effective how do you break that first of all I think the worse our interventions go like the one in Iraq I think the more lights go on in the minds of more people secondly I think part of it has to do with the political process and the public kind of influencing each other now one of the things I found so interesting in the Ron Paul presidential campaign is that although dr. Paul

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campaign is that although dr. Paul created a good amount of this enthusiasm I think what he really did was to see something not create something he noticed that something was happening that no one else saw and I don't even know if you even realized how big it was but this shows that when there's a leader when there's a way for people to show that they want another way they grab on to that so I'd like to see more people in the political process taking this course but you know every time a new weapons system is promoted in the US Congress and approved into law the first thing that the defense contractors do is get a list of the 435 congressional districts and they want to find one fact in each district or at least one in each state to make one piece of this giant war machine that way they can go to every single center at every single congressman is that you don't want to cut this project because you're hurting jobs in your own community there's got to be a way that this great country can support itself without having to have a constant war economy but this is actually this has actually become a fundamental part of our economy if we start pulling back from the world if we stop the interventionist foreign policy then we're actually and we're not only going to have lots of extra money to spend on other programs but we might have lots of money that we don't have to spend or arrays at all in a history class I took your book overthrow his use as a textbook and my foreign professor would like to ask you if Obama's former izzy is the you know Guantanamo know if Obama is elected do you think his administration would break from the current and peerless secure in US foreign policy and if so what impact would this have and my question would be

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would this have and my question would be has Alfred McEwen Alfred Macindaw his heartland theory do you think it's had more influence than let's say the corporations in the oil well tell me again the first part of your question Obama whether Obama would do it and then even Kendall thing ok well here's how Shiite Muslims developed a practice in the early days after the split of Islam they had to live in largely Sunni communities and they were being there being killed as soon as they were found so they developed a project process called takia takia means it's allowed to pretend that you're Sunni or it's allowed to hide your true beliefs in order to survive now in my fantasy political candidates are truly into imperialist and when they get elected they're going to show it but they just can't show it during the campaign common sense however tells us that that doesn't usually happen uh you know I I must say I've spent most of my adult life living abroad that's maybe one reason why I see America a little bit differently from some people here I'm an expert on the politics of a lot of countries but the United States is not one of them my sense is that Barack Obama is a kind of a blank slate on which all of us are projecting various hopes many of them very contradictory and if I were advising him I would tell him if you want to win stay blank and I think that's what he's doing and he's making it possible for people to have all kinds of guesses and speculations about what he's going to do but if there is going to be a radical break away from the idea of American interventionism we haven't gotten any real hint of it yet now if you were running for president and you believed that you believed in this policy and you wanted to get elected

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policy and you wanted to get elected maybe you wouldn't be so explicit about it nonetheless there is no indication that our friend Obama is hiding this project in his mind and it would certainly be something radically different for American politics so all I can say is you can keep your hopes up but watch your wallet okay thanks so much

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